

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ASUNCI 00142 101931Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4178

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 0142

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, OAS, PA

SUBJECT: PARAGUAYAN FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTS ON  
REACTIONS TO TRADE ACT

REF: ASUNCION 0136

1. DURING MEETING BETWEEN CHARGE AND FONMIN SAPENA  
PASTOR RE PARAGUAY'S OBTAINING GSP BENEFICIARY STATUS  
UNDER TITLE V OF THE NEW US TRADE ACT (REFTEL), SAPENA  
VOLUNTEERED FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON CURRENT INTER-AMERICAN  
DEBATE OVER TRADE ACT'S DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF OPEC,  
FUTURE OF DIALOGUE, AND POSSIBLE EFFECT ON BUENOS AIRES  
CONFERENCE.

2. RE OPEC, HE SAID NEW US LAW AS HE UNDERSTANDS IT  
DEFENDS INTERESTS OF OIL CONSUMERS AGAINST UNFAIR  
PRICING PRACTICES OF OPEC. SINCE PARAGUAY IS AN OIL  
CONSUMER, THE LAW APPEARS TO PROTECT PARAGUAY'S INTERESTS.  
HE SCOFFED AT VENEZUELA'S REACTION, SAYING IT DERIVES  
FROM THE INTERNAL POLITICS OF THAT COUNTRY AND ITS  
PRETENSIONS TO INTER-AMERICAN LEADERSHIP RATHER  
THAN TO ANY LEGITIMATE COMPLAINT AGAINST THE U.S.  
VENEZUELA HE SAID FULLY SHARES THE GUILT OF THE REST OF OPEC  
FOR OVERPRICING THIS VITALLY NEEDED COMMODITY.

3. RE ECUADOR'S POSITION ON THE FORTHCOMING B.A.  
CONFERENCE, SAPENA SAID: QTE IF I WERE PRESIDENT  
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PAGE 02 ASUNCI 00142 101931Z

FORD AND SOME SMALL REPUBLIC DECLARED IT WOULD BOY-

COTT A MEETING IF I SIGNED A DOMESTIC LAW, I'D IMMEDIATELY REACH FOR MY PEN UNQTE. HE CHARACTERIZED AS QTE ABSURD UNQTE THE ECUADORAN REACTION.

4. RE B.A. CONFERENCE, SAPENA SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE ARGUMENT USED BY VENEZUELA, ECUADOR, COLOMBIA AND PERU THAT IF THE US TOOK CERTAIN MEASURES IT FELT TO BE IN ITS OWN INTERESTS THEY WOULD REFUSE TO ENGAGE IN A DIALOGUE WITH THE U.S. HE HAD TOLD THE PARAGUAYAN PRESS ON JANUARY 9 (WITH A STERN REQUEST THAT HIS REMARKS NOT BE PUBLISHED) THAT THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THE QTE DIALOGUE UNQTE IS TO DISCUSS AND HOPEFULLY TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES AMONG US. THAT IS WHAT THE DIALOGUE IS ALL ABOUT, HE SAID, AND IT WOULD BE A SHAME NOT TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS AT BUENOS AIRES.

5. SAPENA MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAS NO SYMPATHY FOR QTE THOSE WHOSE CONSCIENCES ARE BOTHERING THEM UNQTE HE WILL AVOID FOR THE PRESENT TAKING SIDES PUBLICLY ON THE ISSUE.  
BRIGGS

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